

TRI-TOWN 1



BOXFORD ♦ MIDDLETON

Superfund Records Center

SITE: American Glue

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www.townonline.com/north

Vol. 40, No. 1



SDMS DocID

469650

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14,

EPA cleans up former Middleton glue factory

Federal workers on-site this week

BY ETHAN FORMAN
TRANSCRIPT STAFF

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has declared the site of a former adhesives manufacturer on School Street in Middleton a Superfund site eligible for federal funds for a cleanup.

The industrial site is located in a mostly residential neighborhood on School Street, Town Administrator Ira Singer said. It contains a former glue factory and an adjoining small building. It's located next to Middleton Spring Beverage Inc.

"What they are doing is removing contents of drums under a removal program," said Steve Johnson, chief of the site management section of the DEP's Northeast Regional Office in Wilmington. Johnson stresses while the money for the cleanup comes from the same federal Superfund legislation that calls for a national priority list, the

site is not on that list.

The Superfund law also provides for small scale cleanups such as the removal of hazardous waste from toxic sites. The cleanup would come under the EPA's Emergency Response and Planning Branch.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a megaton of cure," he said.

Singer said he spoke with the EPA's project manager on the site, Gilberto Irizarry, who told him the agency would take over the cleanup of the site to remove barrels of waste left there.

"He indicated it's not a national priority, but it has been declared part of the EPA Superfund," Singer said.

Irizarry at the EPA could not be reached for comment as of press time. But, a spokesperson for the EPA, Erin Heskett, said "we stepped in to do a removal evaluation at the site in

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Steve Johnson, chief of the site management section of the DEP's Northeast Regional Office.

September."

Middleton Health Agent Leo Cormier said he had a meeting with the engineer in charge of the project last Friday. Cormier said the EPA in-

development" to make sure it fits into the character of the surrounding area. The plan then heads to the Planning Board for its recommendation.

Selectmen voted 4-0 in favor of the project, with Mugford voting "present." Mugford earlier said he "wholeheartedly" supported the garage addition. May Annual Town Meeting approved \$50,000 for the addition's architectural

estimate for the completed addition, which would add two more bays to the existing garage at 195 North Main Street. The architectural plan would be the first phase, said Roy who explained the town plans to complete the project in three phases.

Town Administrator Ira Singer said the total cost would be under \$250,000. To complete the project and keep costs down, the town most likely would use donated

the course of the discussion. "In that case, if I let it go I thought he was going to grill DPW director," Kassiotis said. Kassiotis told Mugford, "B you are a member of the union first," and calling Mugford long-time, valued member of DPW, "he asked Mugford to list his questions to the building.

"I'm just looking out for the welfare of the employees," Mugford said.

EPA

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tends to remove 500 storage drums from the property over a three-month period. The drums would also be tested, Cormier said.

Heskett said the barrels are both "labeled and unlabeled." Some are leaking, some have deteriorated, and some have no lids, he said. The possibility exists that if chemicals mix, it could cause a fire, Heskett said. The EPA must also pack them to be removed so they can be shipped, Cormier said.

"The big thing, we don't want the drums to be vandalized or corrode into the environment," Johnson said.

Johnson said a contractor hired by the owners of the property, the Aute-

rio family, did do an inventory of the drums and he estimated the cost of the cleanup from that at \$250,000.

Heskett said the EPA has authorized \$800,000 for the cleanup, but that is a "conservative estimate" that contains a contingency in case the scope of the cleanup is broadened.

"I don't know what it's going to cost the EPA," he said. The drums contained "a number of hazardous materials," but Johnson could not say what the materials were.

Cormier said he could not say what exactly was in the drums, but the EPA suspected they are drying agents once used at the now defunct American Glue & Resin Inc.'s factory on 40 School Street. The factory has been closed for about a decade.

Cormier said the EPA official could not say how much the cleanup would cost, but he indicated the Au-

terio family, which owns the 1-acre property according to Assessor's records, would be billed for the cleanup. "They didn't give a specific amount," Cormier said. The property is assessed at \$263,380.

The town first became aware of contamination at the site in 1984 or 1985, Cormier said. At the time, an underground storage tank containing a chemical containing toluene, a drying agent used to make glue tacky, contaminated a nearby house well owned by the LeColst family, Cormier said. Singer said the property was found to be uninhabitable, and the case then went to court.

Heskett said toluene evaporates when it comes into contact with the air and it is flammable.

It can cause headaches and dizziness if inhaled, said Susanne Simon, an environmental health scientist with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a federal agency.

The DEP stepped in, deemed the site a hazardous waste site, and had the storage tank replaced, Singer said. When the facility was abandoned, drums of chemicals, junk and tractor trailer boxes were left behind, he said.

"It's comforting to know the EPA...is coming in to take the necessary cleanup action," Singer said. The town has been "pushing for that for years, now," he said, but, the DEP did not have the legislative authority to make the property owners clean up the site.

Change in ear

North Shore Technical High School in Middleton has announced a change in the early release schedule. The dates listed are early release dates for remainder of the school year.

Area codes

BY AL TURCO
CNC STAFF WRITER

For the second time in two years the state may add two new area codes to eastern Massachusetts.

In 1988, the 617 area code was split into 617 and 508. Then in 1990 the 617 and 508 area codes were again split with the addition of area codes 978 and 781.

Now, The Tri-Towns could get the third area code in 11 years, and Boston proper could be split into two codes.

Peter Bowman, a spokesman for Bell Atlantic, said two factors have contributed to the exhaustion of available numbers.

"An explosion of telecommunications technology and all the new competition in the industry have created this situation," Bowman said.

Cell phones, pagers, fax machines, modems, and the increased use of internal phone communication by many businesses have created a great demand for new numbers and, as a result, new area codes.

Approximately 8 million combinations exist for each area code. But the combinations disappear quickly because of the antiquated system used to distribute numbers.

The system, designed while the Bell monopoly provided phone service to all, grants numbers, to

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